

Fresno, CA – Congressman Jim Costa (D-CA) announced today his support for the selection of Naval Air Station (NAS) Lemoore as the future home of the F-35C Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) mission. Costa was joined by fellow Central Valley Congressmen Devin Nunes (R) and Dennis Cardoza (D) in sending a letter to the United States Navy urging the homebasing of the JSF aircraft at the Central Valley naval installation.

“NAS Lemoore’s strategic location in California’s Central Valley and excellent mission support facilities make this installation best suited for the Joint Strike Fighter mission,” Costa wrote with his colleagues.

“Continued success at NAS Lemoore will benefit both the United States Navy and the Central Valley that we call home. Without reservation, we support homebasing the Joint Strike Fighter mission at NAS Lemoore.”

The Navy is currently considering locations on the West Coast to base the F-35C Joint Strike Fighter mission. These aircraft will replace the FA-18C Hornet aircraft currently stationed at NAS Lemoore. As required by the National Environmental Protection Act, the Navy is drafting an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) regarding the potential homebasing of the JSF on the West Coast. The Draft EIS will be published early next year.

The text of the letter Costa sent with his colleagues is below:

April 25, 2011

The Honorable Roger M. Natsuhara

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy

1000 Navy Pentagon

Room 4E739

Washington, DC 20350

Dear Secretary Natsuhara,

As members of Congress from California's Central Valley, we write in strong support of the homebasing of the F-35C Joint Strike Fighter at Naval Air Station (NAS) Lemoore. NAS Lemoore's strategic location in California's Central Valley and excellent mission support facilities make this installation best suited for the Joint Strike Fighter mission.

As the newest and largest West Coast naval master jet base, NAS Lemoore is uniquely positioned to accept these new aircraft and the accompanying Navy personnel. With two 13,500 foot runways, a naval hospital, a new housing complex, and other facilities that increase the quality of life for the men and women of our Navy, NAS Lemoore has become an integral part of West Coast naval operations, the city of Lemoore, and surrounding communities. Further, a nearby veterans hospital offers quality healthcare for our robust community of naval personnel, veterans, and their families.

Since its commissioning in 1961, NAS Lemoore has been an economic engine for the city of Lemoore and California's Central Valley. All told, NAS Lemoore has contributed more than a half a billion dollars to the regional economy and generated over 4,540 jobs in our communities. Continued success at NAS Lemoore will benefit both the United States Navy and the Central Valley that we call home. Without reservation, we support homebasing the Joint Strike Fighter mission at NAS Lemoore.

Sincerely,

JIM COSTA
Member of Congress

DEVIN NUNES

Member of Congress

DENNIS CARDOZA

Member of Congress